

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SANTIA 03907 132347Z

62

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SUBJECT: GOC NATIONAL CAMPAIGN OF SOCIAL ACTION

REF: A) SANTIAGO 3864 B) SANTIAGO 3616

1. SUMMARY: GOC HAS INITIATED A SOCIAL ACTION CAMPAIGN TO COMPLEMENT ITS CURRENT ECONOMIC POLICY AND SOFTEN EFFECTS OF ECONOMIC CRISIS ON POOR. SIX MAJOR SOCIAL ACTION PROGRAMS WERE ANNOUNCED, AND INTERIOR MINISTER WAS GIVEN COORDINATION ROLE IN THIS MULTI-MINISTRY EFFORT. ALTHOUGH GOC CONCERN FOR POOREST SECTORS IS GENUINE, SEVERAL OF ANNOUNCED PROGRAMS HAVE SO FAR BEEN OPERATING WITH ONLY LIMITED SUCCESS AND PROBLEM OF FUNDING LIMITS POSSIBILITIES. END SUMMARY.

2. GOC IS NOW FULLY COMMITTED TO A NATIONAL "CAMPAIGN OF SOCIAL ACTION" TO ALLEVIATE EFFECTS OF THE CURRENT ECONOMIC AUSTERITY POLICY ON THE LOWER AND MIDDLE CLASSES. INTERIOR MINISTER BENAVIDES, REFERRING TO THE "DEEP POLITICAL AND SOCIAL EFFECTS" THAT THE CURRENT "ECONOMIC EMERGENCY" HAS ON THESE GROUPS, FORMALLY ANNOUNCED THE NEW PROGRAM IN NATIONWIDE ADDRESS JUNE 10 AND SUBSEQUENT MEETING WITH PROVINCIAL AND COMMUNITY OFFICIALS.

3. INTERIOR MINISTRY WILL COORDINATE ALL SOCIAL PROGRAMMS
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PAGE 02 SANTIA 03907 132347Z

WITHIN GOC, GIVING BENAVIDES A NEW "SUPER-MINISTER" STATUS.

WITHIN MINISTRY, ARMY COLONEL JULIO FRANZANI HAS BEEN DESIGNATED CHIEF OF SOCIAL ACTION AND PRESUMABLY WILL HANDLE DETAILS OF COORDINATION. ACCORDING TO PRESS, FRANZANI SAID THAT CURRENT CAMPAIGN WILL CONSIST OF TWO PHASES: FIRST BEGAN MAY 15 AND WILL END DEC 31, 1975; SECOND PHASE WILL THEN BEGIN AND CONTINUE THROUGH DEC 31, 1976.

4. BENAVIDES LISTED FOLLOWING SIX PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO ASSIST THOSE MOST AFFECTED BY CURRENT ECONOMIC CRISIS: NATIONAL PROGRAM OF MINIMUM WAGE EMPLOYMENT BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT BODIES TO ABSORB UNSKILLED, UNEMPLOYED WORKERS; NUTRITION PROGRAM TO COMPLEMENT DIET OF CHILDREN UNDER SIX YEARS OF AGE; PROGRAM TO ASSIST IN FEEDING AND HOUSING SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN OF POOR; EMERGENCY HOUSING TO PROVIDE SEMI-PERMANENT QUARTERS FOR HOMELESS; SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM TO ENSURE THAT ALL CHILEANS HAVE AVAILABLE ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF FOOD AT REASONABLE PRICES; AND PROGRAM TO CREATE, MAINTAIN AND SUPERVISE NURSERY SCHOOLS.

5. COMMENT: GOC IS CONCERNED OVER POLITICAL AND SOCIAL EFFECTS OF ECONOMIC PROGRAM, AND AWARE THAT IT NEEDS TO ACT. MOST OF ANNOUNCED PROGRAMS, HOWEVER, EITHER ALREADY EXIST OR HAVE BEEN PREVIOUSLY DISCUSSED, AND EVEN GOC SUPPORTERS WILL ADMIT THAT THEY ARE SO FAR MUCH LESS THAN ADEQUATE OFFSET FOR EFFECTS OF ITS AUSTERE ECONOMIC POLICY. GOC IS SERIOUSLY RESTRICTED IN EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAMS BY LACK OF FUNDS, SINCE SEVERE BUDGET DISCIPLINE IS AT HEART OF CURRENT ECONOMIC RECOVERY PROGRAM.

6. PRESUMABLY FRANZANI DESIGNATION TAKES PLACE OF PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED DECISION (REF B) TO APPOINT A NEW VICE MINISTER TO COORDINATE ACTIVITIES OF MINISTRIES INVOLVED IN SOCIAL PROGRAMS. FRANZANI IS A SENIOR CAREER OFFICER WHO DOES NOT GIVE THE IMPRESSION OF VITALITY OR ABILITY NEEDED TO HANDLE WHAT COULD BECOME A VERY DEMANDING TASK.
POPPER

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